

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6764

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 11964

EXDIS

DEPT PASS SECRETARY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, EG, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI ACTION AGAINST AMOCO OPERATION IN THE GULF
OF SUEZ

REF (A) CAIRO 11958, (B) CAIRO 11949, (C) CAIRO 11947,
(D) TEL AVIV 6097,

1. HAVE JUST TALKED TO ROSS CRAIG OF AMOCO, WHO HAS BEEN
IN TOUCH WITH HILAL. CRAIG STATED EGYPTIANS WISHED MARINER,
AFTER BEING ORDERED OUT BY ISRAELIS, TO RETURN TO 304.1
SITE ESCORTED BY FIVE EGYPTIAN GUNBOATS. RIG FORMAN REFUSED
AND RIG REMAINS OUT OF THE AREA. CRAIG SUPPORTS THIS
DECISION.

2. CRAIG CONFIRMED HILAL HAS LEFT DECISION TO HIM, BUT MADE
IT CLEAR GOE ANXIOUS HAVE RIG RETURN TO SITE. AMOCO HAS
DECIDED SEND RIG BACK TO LOCATION, BUT ONLY IF THERE ARE
NO RPT NO EGYPTIAN OR ISRAELI GUNBOATS PRESENT. CRAIG THOUGHT
IT WILL TAKE MINIMUM OF TWO DAYS TO SEND RIG BACK, ES-
PECIALLY SINCE LOCATION MUST BE RE-SURVEYED AND NEW BUOYS
WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO BE LAID.

3. CRAIG INDICATED HE TOLD EGYPTIANS AMOCO WOULD, THROUGH
ITS CHICAGO OFFICE AND THROUGH DEPT, SEEK TO ASCERTAIN
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IF ISRAELIES WILL WITHDRAW, HE CLAIMED THAT AMOCO HAD EARLIER

RECEIVED FIRM DEPT "ASSURANCES" THAT THERE WOULD BE NO ISRAELI GUNBOATS IN THE AREA AND THAT THE DEPT HAS SENT TOW REPS TO TEL AVIV TO BE CERTAIN THERE WAS "NO COMMUNICATIONS FOUL UP." (CRAIG MAY HAVE INTERPRETED TERM "REPRESENTATIONS" AS "REPRESENTATIVES".)

4. WHILE NOT YET CERTAIN, CRAIG INDICATES THAT AMOCO PEOPLE SAY THAT ISRAELIS SANK ONE OF COMPANY'S BUOYS BY GUN FIRE OR EXPLOSIVES. ACTION WAS CLOSE TO ONE OF AMOCO'S PLATFORMS (NUMBER 6) AND, ACCORDING CRAIG'S VERSION, TOOK PLACE ABOUT 1300. (WE CANNOT BE SURE THAT CRAIG'S TIME REFERENCE IS RIGHT, SINCE HE WAS NOT AVAILABLE THIS MORNING. IT MAY BE BASED ON SAME REPORT AMOCO RECEIVED EARLIER IN THE DAY (REFS B AND C). CRAIG SAID IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CHECK EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED, SINCE AMOCO RECORDED THE WHOLE INCIDENT.

5. CRAIG PLANS CONTACT AMOCO CHICAGO HEADQUARTERS AGAIN AT 1730 LOCAL THIS AFTERNOON TO RECEIVE LATEST INSTRUCTIONS. HE ASSUMES CHICAGO HEADQUARTERS WILL HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH DEPT ON MATTER.

6. CRAIG CALLED A SECOND TIME AT 1630 LOCAL. AMOCO PEOPLE AT RAS SHUKAIR HAVE JUST REPORTED THE TWO EGYPTIAN GUNBOATS THERE HAVE LEFT AND ARE HEADING STRAIGHT FOR 304.1 LOCATION. SINCE HE HAD ALSO BEEN ASSURED (BY HILAL) THAT GUNBOATS WERE BEING WITHDRAWN, HE ASSUMES THAT GAMASY'S ORDERS TO THAT EFFECT HAVE NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED. ALTHOUGH RIG IS OUT OF THE AREA, HE NOTES THERE ARE OTHER AMOCO PLATFORMS IN THE GENERAL AREA AND AMOCO PERSONNEL WORKING ON PLATFORMS ARE IN STATE OF CONSIDERABLE AGITATION. HE ASKED IF I COULD CONFIRM THAT GAMASY HAD SAID HE WILL WITHDRAW GUNBOATS. I TOLD HIM THAT GAMASY HAD SO INDICATED TO ME.
EILTS

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